

Candor

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Summary: Drabble. Hints of Arcee/Ultra Magnus. "There's no need, soldier. This isn't your burden," Takes place after Evolution.

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There was an uneasy silence that hung in the base. Arcee looked from the corridor to see Ultra Magnus, just staring at the claw that supposedly was to replace his servo. Against her better judgment, she asked, "Commander, how have you been?"

"I've been fine, soldier," Ultra Magnus replied, his vocal processor bitter; he didn't look up from his servo. "I still function. That's what matters. But at a great personal cost."

Arcee frowned. "I hope I'm not prying. But I know that it will take some adjusting to. I can help you out."

The commander shook his helm, turning to face her, his optics tired and cloudy. "There's no need, soldier. This isn't your burden," He narrowed his optics as he shook his arm; he tried to make the claw move, but it just shook.

He lowered his head, his form slumped. "It's mine."

"It doesn't have to." Arcee said softly, reaching for the commander's new hand.

Ultra Magnus looked surprised at first, but he blinked and smiled slightly. "I know, I know I don't have to do this alone, even though

that I have been trained to-"

"Everyone needs help," Arcee pointed out, her optics making full contact with the commander's, soft and reflective. "Trust me, I know."

Ultra Magnus looked off to the side before his gaze made it back to Arcee, nodding slowly, and surely.

"Maybe I can help you get used to it, if you'd let me, sir." Arcee offered, lifting her own servo off of the claw and Ultra Magnus straightened up, standing onto his pedes.

"All rightâ€|" The commander faltered, and the fembot could tell that he was unsure of this. Of course she had noticed it, but she figured that he could learn to adjust to this in time.

He stared at the appendage, where his servo once held the mighty Forge of Solus Prime, before the beast that was called Predaking had crushed his hand savagely, brutally, static and pain coursing through, where his servo was beyond repair, and he would never be able to use his weapons again.

He narrowed his optics, his mouth set in a grim line, and he tried to move it, tried to break it in, and it shook again. He vented out a breath and he tried again, and it shook; it wouldn't open.

"Hey, I'm still here," Arcee said, her vocal processor reassuring, right beside him. "Take your time."

Ultra Magnus nodded, and he then tried again, and focused. The word "open" appeared in his mind, repeating itself over and over, like a mantra.

It shook, but then he felt the appendage move, an inch. There was a quick reflex, and the claw opened, all the way.

The commander couldn't believe it, yet his mouth went agape; he then closed the claw slowly, and then opened it gently.

Arcee couldn't help but put her servo on Ultra Magnus's arm, and the commander turned to smile at her, a grateful expression on his faceplate.

"Thank you, Arcee. This will indeed take some getting used to. Thank you for your help and for your candor. You're a true soldier."

"Takes one to know one."

\*\*(A/N: This is only the second time I've worked with writing a disabled character (the first being Ming Hua from Legend of Korra, so if I'm at all out of line when it comes to anything in this fic, please, let me know. Just because I'm also disabled doesn't mean I get a free pass.) \*\*

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